Legal Fees of Prasar Bharati

2683. SHRI VIJAY JAWAHARLAL DARDA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been six-time increase in the expenditure on fees paid to Government lawyers during the last two years by the Prasar Bharati;

(b) if so, how this expenditure remained around Rs.40 lakhs per year between 2004-07 and it is shooting up to Rs.4.5 crores during 2007-2009;

(c) the number of appearances by lawyers in courts during 2004-07 and 2007-09; and

(d) whether rupees one lakh per appearance was paid to a Government lawyer against an average fee of rupees five thousand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (DR. S. JAGATHRAKSHAKAN): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Policy norms for Cable operators

2684. SHRI T. T. V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether a new policy norms for new cable TV operators have been formulated; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI CHOUDHURY MOHAN JATUA): (a) and (b) The Government has on 26.11.2009 announced the 'Guidelines for providing Headend-in-the-Sky (HITS) broadcasting service in India' which lay down the procedure and terms and conditions for grant of such permission. HITS opens up another mode of delivery of multichannel digital Television signals from a central facility via satellite to Cable operator any where in India. This therefore overcomes the limitations being faced by the Multi System Operators who were constrained to confine their operation only to a limited geographical area depending on the cable/fibre network. Since this technology brings down the cost of starting digital cable operations and makes signals accessible, it is expected to increase the spread of cable operations into areas yet uncovered. The existing cable operators will have the flexibility to switchover to signals from HITS service provider and upgrade their services from analog to digital. He will have the option to take only pay TV channels from the HITS provider and receive free-to-air channels directly from the broadcaster. However, the Cable TV Operators continue to be regulated as per the provisions of the Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and rules made thereunder. Salient features of the new policy on HITS Broadcasting service are as under: